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BILL 246

46TH LEGISLATURE - STATE OF NEW MEXICO - FIRST SESSION, 2003

INTRODUCED BY

James G. Taylor

DISCUSSION DRAFT

AN ACT

RELATING TO EDUCATION; PROVIDING FOR A TRUANCY PREVENTION PROGRAM WITHIN THE CHILDREN, YOUTH AND FAMILIES DEPARTMENT; MAKING AN APPROPRIATION.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF NEW MEXICO:

Section 1. CHILDREN, YOUTH AND FAMILIES DEPARTMENT--
ADDITIONAL DUTIES--TRUANCY PREVENTION PROGRAM --

A. The children, youth and families department shall establish and implement a truancy prevention program. Upon application of a community-based truancy agency, the department may award a grant that is intended to reduce and prevent repeated school absences by combating the root causes of truancy. The application and the grant award shall include such provisions as the department deems necessary to ensure compliance with the intent of the program, provided that:

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1 (1) a grant award shall not exceed fifty
2 thousand dollars (\$50,000);

3 (2) a grant award shall be contingent upon an
4 equal matching amount to be contributed to the program by the
5 community-based truancy agency;

6 (3) the application and the contract awarding
7 the grant shall explain in detail how the community-based
8 truancy agency will use the money to track students,
9 communicate with parents, make telephone and house calls and,
10 if necessary, prosecute parents who abuse their children by
11 keeping them out of school; and

12 (4) the application and the contract awarding
13 the grant shall explain in detail how the community-based
14 truancy agency will work with local school districts, law
15 enforcement agencies, courts and juvenile authorities in
16 implementing the program.

17 B. Grants awarded pursuant to this section shall
18 reflect the ethnic, cultural, economic and geographic diversity
19 of New Mexico.

20 C. The department shall promulgate such rules
21 concerning application requirements, reporting requirements and
22 program monitoring as are necessary to ensure compliance with
23 the intent of this section.

24 D. The department shall report annually to the
25 governor and the legislature on the truancy prevention program.

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1 The report shall include information on each grant awarded,
2 school attendance rates, reporting and monitoring activities
3 and such other information as is necessary for the governor and
4 legislature to measure the results of the program

5 E. As used in this section, "community-based
6 truancy agency" means a program or unit within the following
7 that has as its purpose the reduction or prevention of truancy:

- 8 (1) a municipality or county;
- 9 (2) a school district;
- 10 (3) a local law enforcement agency;
- 11 (4) a district, magistrate or municipal court;
- 12 (5) a district or city attorney;
- 13 (6) a local juvenile authority; or
- 14 (7) a consortium of two or more of the above
15 agencies.

16 Section 2. APPROPRIATION.--One million dollars
17 (\$1,000,000) is appropriated from the general fund to the
18 children, youth and families department for expenditure in
19 fiscal years 2004 and 2005 for the purpose of making grant
20 awards pursuant to the provisions of this act. Any unexpended
21 or unencumbered balance remaining at the end of fiscal year
22 2005 shall revert to the general fund.